

AD-A162 182

INVOLVEMENT WITH PRIOR JOB SOCIAL SUPPORT AND THE
PERCEIVED QUALITY OF LT (U) STATE UNIV OF NEW YORK AT
BUFFALO DEPT OF PSYCHOLOGY R W RICE ET AL OCT 85
UNCLASSIFIED TR-3-ONR N88014-84-K-0002

1/1

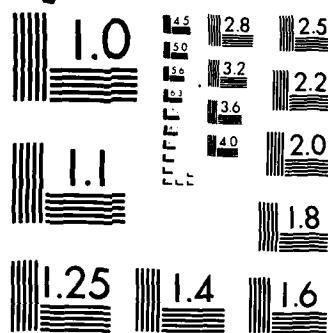
F/G 5/9

NL

END

FILED

DTK



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS-1963-A

AD-A162 102

DMC FILE COPY

Unclassified

12

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM
1. REPORT NUMBER ONR-3	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO.	3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle) Involvement with Prior Job, Social Support, and the Perceived Quality of Life Among the Unemployed		5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED Interim Technical Report
7. AUTHOR(s) Robert W. Rice, Mark A. Bonacci, & Barbara B. Bunker		6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS Department of Psychology State University of New York at Buffalo 4230 Ridge Lea Road, Amherst, NY 14226		10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS NR-170-964
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS Organizational Effectiveness Research Programs Office of Naval Research (Code 4420E) Arlington, VA 22217		12. REPORT DATE October 1985
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS (if different from Controlling Office)		13. NUMBER OF PAGES 26
		15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report) Unclassified
		15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE
16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report) Approved for public release; distribution unlimited		
17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)		
18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) work social support perceived quality of life buffering hypothesis satisfaction coping hypothesis unemployment		
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Forty-eight participants in a community program serving the unemployed completed a questionnaire measuring psychological involvement with prior job, current levels of social support from spouse and others, and four features of the perceived quality of life (pQL): Current pQL, Perceived Change, Need Fulfillment, and Hopefulness. The present sample scored significantly lower than national norms on five standard pQL items, thereby corroborating previous research suggesting that pQL suffers during periods of unemployment.		

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, the relationship between prior job involvement and pQL was significant and negative for three of the four pQL scales. This result, in conjunction with prior research, suggests that the relationship between employment-related involvement and pQL during periods of unemployment holds for American samples as well as for British and Australian samples, and that it holds for measures of job-specific involvement as well as for measures of more general work involvement. Contrary to Hypothesis 2, the interactions between prior job involvement and current social support were not significant for any of the pQL measures, thereby failing to support either the buffering or coping models of social support. Discussion is focused on implications for future research and for programs serving the unemployed.

**Involvement with Prior Job, Social Support, and the
Perceived Quality of Life Among the Unemployed**

**Robert W. Rice, Mark A. Bonacci, and Barbara B. Bunker
State University of New York at Buffalo**

Technical Report ONR-3

**This research was supported by the Organizational Effectiveness
Research Program, Office of Naval Research (Code 4420E), under
Contract No. N00014-84-K-002; NR 170-964.**

**Approved for public release; distribution unlimited. Reproduction in
whole or in part is permitted for any purpose of the U.S. government.**

Involvement with Prior Job, Social Support, and the
Perceived Quality of Life Among the Unemployed

Robert W. Rice, Mark A. Bonacci, and Barbara B. Bunker

State University of New York at Buffalo

Forty-eight participants in a community program serving the unemployed completed a questionnaire measuring psychological involvement with prior job, current levels of social support from spouse and others, and four features of the perceived quality of life (pQL): Current pQL, Perceived Change, Need Fulfillment, and Hopefulness. The present sample scored significantly lower than national norms on five standard pQL items, thereby corroborating previous research suggesting that pQL suffers during periods of unemployment. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, the relationship between prior job involvement and pQL was significant and negative for three of the four pQL scales. This result, in conjunction with prior research, suggests that the relationship between employment-related involvement and pQL during periods of unemployment holds for American samples as well as for British and Australian samples, and that it holds for measures of job-specific involvement as well as for measures of more general work involvement. Contrary to Hypothesis 2, the interactions between prior job involvement and current social support were not significant for any of the pQL measures, thereby failing to support either the buffering or coping models of social support. Discussion is focused on implications for future research and for programs serving the unemployed.

Accession For	
NTIS	CRA&I <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DIIC	TAB <input type="checkbox"/>
Unannounced <input type="checkbox"/>	
Justification	
By	
Distribution/	
Availability Codes	
Dist	Aval and/or Sp. Util
A-1	



Involvement with Prior Job, Social Support, and the
Perceived Quality of Life Among the Unemployed

Robert W. Rice, Mark A. Bonacci, and Barbara B. Bunker

The perceived quality of life (pQL) concerns the affective reactions one directs toward life as a whole or toward specific domains of life, e.g., the perceived quality of work life, family life, or leisure life (Andrews & Withey, 1976; Campbell, 1981; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Rice, McFarlin, Hunt, & Near, 1985). Self-report measures of satisfaction, happiness, mood, or anxiety are among the many methods for operationalizing the pQL concept. Given the diversity of measures reflecting this general concept, it is preferable to use a generic term like pQL or subjective well-being when referring to such research rather than relying on more operationally restricted terms such as "satisfaction" or "happiness."

Applied psychologists from several subdisciplines have concerned themselves with studies of pQL, most often through the study of satisfaction. Industrial and organizational psychologists have a long and continuing interest in job satisfaction (e.g., Locke, 1976, 1984). Similarly, family psychologists have developed theories and large bodies of empirical findings concerned with family and marital satisfaction (Spanier & Lewis, 1980). Mental health psychologists have also used measures of satisfaction, morale, and psychological well-being as indicators of positive mental health (as opposed to the mere absence of mental illness, e.g., Bradburn, 1969; Gutek, 1978; Jahoda, 1958; French & Kahn, 1962; Veroff, Douvan & Kulka, 1981). More recently, psychologists involved in the social indicators movement have developed pQL measures that can be used to guide and evaluate social service programs (e.g., Andrews & Withey, 1976; Campbell, Converse, & Rodgers, 1976; Diener, 1984; Gutek, 1978).

Practitioners and researchers concerned with families, organizations, mental

health, and government service programs have both intrinsic and extrinsic interests in relevant pQL measures. Intrinsically, there is value in understanding and promoting conditions that engender positive feelings and beliefs. As Campbell (1976) has argued so forcefully, subjective feelings of well-being are, in some sense, the ultimate concern of public policy makers at all levels. Extrinsically, there is interest in measures of pQL because of the reliable correlations of such measures with other outcome variables of concern, e.g., physical health, turnover, absenteeism, divorce, family violence, etc (see Diener, 1984; Locke, 1976, 1984; Campbell, 1981; Okun et al., 1984).

Job Involvement

The present study examined the role of prior job involvement in predicting pQL within a sample of unemployed individuals receiving assistance from a community-based center for the unemployed. Jobs provide people with a variety of important life outcomes, both material and psychological. Because such outcomes cannot be provided by a job during periods of unemployment, pQL may suffer. Several empirical studies of pQL among the unemployed have documented negative effects of this type (see reviews by Dooley & Catalano, 1980; Jahoda 1981; Kahn, 1981; and Warr, 1982, 1984).

We expected that degree of psychological involvement with the job held prior to job loss would influence reactions of the unemployed. Job involvement concerns the centrality of the job role to the self-concept of the individual (Kanungo, 1979; Loden & Kejner, 1965; Rabinowitz & Hall, 1979). Given this conceptual definition of job involvement, we assumed that people highly involved in their jobs would have more to lose from unemployment than would people with little sense of job involvement. In addition to the economic and social costs of unemployment experienced by everyone during periods of unemployment, highly job involved people are likely to suffer a serious psychological loss as well; unemployment would leave them without a major

source of self-definition and self-esteem. Based on this logic, we derived the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. There is a negative relationship between level of psychological involvement with prior job and the perceived quality of life while unemployed.

This hypothesis has not been tested using measures of job involvement of the type employed in the present study. However, studies of British and Australian samples have yielded negative relationships between measures of general work involvement and pQL (Feather & Bond, 1983; Stafford, Jackson, & Banks, 1980; Warr, 1978; Warr & Jackson, 1984). This distinction between job involvement and work involvement will be discussed in greater detail in a later section of this article.

Social Support

We also anticipated that the level of social support would moderate the relationship between prior job involvement and pQL among the unemployed. That is, we expected pQL to vary as a function of an interaction between prior job involvement and social support. This expectation was based on a large body of literature concerning the relationship between environmental stressors, coping mechanisms, social support, and outcome measures reflecting the mental and physical health of the individual (e.g., French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1982; House, 1981; Kaplan, 1983; Thoits, 1982). We considered the combination of high job involvement and job loss to be a significant life stressor. The literature suggests two patterns in which social support might statistically interact with such a stressor to produce pQL responses. The first of these patterns is referred to as the "buffering" hypothesis (French et al., 1982) and the second is called the "coping" hypothesis (Lin et al., 1979). Because we had no basis for predicting which form the hypothesized interaction between social support and prior job involvement was most likely to take, we chose to entertain two competing hypotheses concerning the form of this interaction.

Hypothesis 2a. Social support "buffers" the stress-inducing effects of high prior job involvement and job loss such that: a) under conditions of low social support, there is a negative relationship between prior job involvement and pQL, whereas b) under conditions of high social support, there is no relationship between prior job involvement and pQL.

Hypothesis 2b. Social support serves as a means of "coping" with the stress induced by unemployment among people who were high in psychological involvement with their prior jobs such that: a) under conditions of high prior job involvement (i.e., higher stress), there is a positive relationship between social support and pQL, whereas b) under conditions of low prior job involvement (lower stress), there is no relationship between social support and pQL.

These two hypotheses reflect important differences in the function and process of social support (Seer, et al., 1983). The buffering hypothesis views social support as a protective social structural mechanism. The stronger one's social support network, the less negative are the deleterious personal outcomes that would otherwise occur under stressful environmental conditions. In contrast, the coping hypothesis views social support as a reactive behavioral pattern elicited by the experience of stress. The more effective one is in developing a strong social support network as a means of coping with high stress, the more positive are the outcomes.

Based on just the significance of the interaction effect, one cannot choose between the buffering (Hypothesis 2a) and coping (Hypothesis 2b) models of stress and social support. The relevant regression lines must be plotted to determine whether the obtained pattern of results fit best with the coping or the buffering model. We are aware of no prior research testing either of these social support hypotheses within the context of prior job involvement and pQL among the unemployed.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 48 unemployed male (N=35) and female (N=13) participants in a

local program for the unemployed. This grass roots community-based program provided participants with financial assistance, job search services, and counseling.

The average age of subjects was 39.3 years and 79% were married. At the time the study was conducted, all subjects had been unemployed at least 10% of the prior year, thereby meeting Cobb and Kasl's (1977) operational definition of "prolonged unemployment."

Procedure

The subjects participating in the present study were self-selected from a total of 51 program participants who had sought out crisis intervention counseling from a licensed social worker volunteering his services to the center. Prior to their first interview, the counselor asked subjects to complete a self-administered questionnaire described simply as a study of reactions to unemployment. All potential subjects were assured that participation in the study was not required to receive counseling. Of the 51 individuals requested to participate, 48 did so. All 51 individuals received the counseling services free of charge.

Measures

The questionnaire included multi-item scales measuring psychological involvement with prior job, current level of social support provided by two sources (spouse and friends/family), and pQL for life as a whole. Conceptual definitions and the items comprising each scale are presented below.

Prior job involvement. "Prior" job involvement refers to the centrality of the job in the respondent's life when he or she was last employed. We assessed this concept by adapting five items from the job involvement scales developed by Lodahl and Kejner (1965) and Kanungo (1982). Each item was modified to provide a retrospective report of job involvement by adding the clause "When I was employed...". For example, one item read "When I was employed, most of my interests

were centered around my job." The remaining items concerned the following issues: believing that the most important things in life involved your job, feeling very much involved in your job, believing that your personal life goals were primarily job oriented, and feeling that your job was only a small part of who you are (reverse scored). Five-point Likert scales were used to assess the respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Current social support. Social support concerns the degree to which assistance of various types are provided by the people encountered in one's life. Using an adaptation of Gore's (1973) scale, we assessed general emotional support from two sources: spouse, and friends/family. These scales provided descriptions of two hypothetical individuals who differed in terms of the social support they provided. For example, one item used with married male respondents described "Mary" as "the kind of wife who doesn't pay much attention when her husband wants to tell her about his difficulties and misfortunes. If she listens at all, she doesn't do much to comfort him." This same item described "Helen" as "a very sympathetic wife who is always ready to listen when things are going bad for her husband. She does everything possible to make him feel better." The respondent's task was to describe what his wife "is like these days" by checking off one of the five following alternatives: "My wife is..." like Mary, more like Mary than like Helen, halfway between Mary and Helen, more like Helen than like Mary, or like Helen.

The measure of social support from spouse was comprised of four items. In addition to the item presented verbatim above, there were descriptions concerning: being helpful and making life easier vs. being more of a burden than a help; going along with spouse's wishes vs. getting own way; and providing help when discouraged vs. not helping spouse combat bad feelings and worries. Gore's original scale always described female spouses; these items were appropriately reworded when respondents were female.

The measure of social support from friends and family members other than spouse was comprised of two items. One item described friends that go out of their way to help when things are going badly vs. friends who are never around when you need them. The other item described relatives that can be depended on to make things go easier vs. those that don't really help when needed.

Overall perceived quality of life. Overall pQL is the affective reaction directed toward life as a whole. Because there is no consensus among pQL researchers as to the best way to assess this concept (Andrews & Withey, 1976; Diener, 1984), the present study adopted four measurement methods that differed in terms of their orientation and general approach. As described below, this set of measures included scales that focused on: a) current feelings; b) explicit comparison of current feelings to feelings prior to job loss; c) the explicit comparison of what one has and what one wants; and d) hopes and beliefs about the future. By using this fairly broad set of measures, we expected to cover the pQL concept adequately. Each scale was scored so that high scores reflect high levels of pQL.

The first pQL measure (Current pQL) was comprised of eight items requiring evaluation of both life as a whole and several significant domains of life. Included in this scale were the widely-used happiness question developed by Bradburn (1969) and a single satisfaction question similar to the one developed by Campbell et al (1976). The remaining six items used the seven-alternative "delighted-terrible" (D-T) response format developed by Andrews and Withey (1976). Using D-T scales, respondents indicated how they felt about the following referents: present social life, things you've done with friends, life as a whole, yourself, amount of respect you get from others, and what you are accomplishing in life.

The second pQL measure (Perceived Change) was comprised of five items. Each item required respondents to compare the current situation to that which they had experienced while still employed. For example, one item was "Compared to when you

were employed, how happy are you with your life now?" The response alternatives for this item were much less happy, somewhat less happy, about the same, somewhat more happy, and much more happy. The remaining four items concerned the amount of respect from others, how you feel about yourself, the quality of relationships with others, and satisfaction with life as a whole. Each item had five alternatives providing direct ratings of perceived change when present conditions are compared to conditions while still employed.

The third pQL measure (Need Fulfillment) was comprised of difference scores calculated from four pairs of questions developed by Cobb and Kasl (1977). For each pair, respondents were asked to indicate both how much of a given outcome they were currently receiving and how much of that outcome they would like to receive. For example, one pair of questions asked "How much do you feel you are getting ahead in the world now?" and "How much would you like to get ahead in the world?" Identical six-alternative response scales were used to answer each question: a great deal, quite a lot, a fair amount, some, not very much, and very little. The difference between the pair of scores provided a measure of need fulfillment. The other three concerns in these questions were security when thinking about the future, getting a chance to use the skills you are best at, and doing important things so that others notice you and respect you for what you do. The sum of the four calculated difference scores provided the overall measure of need fulfillment.

The fourth pQL measure (Hopefulness) was future oriented. This two-item scale is comprised of items asking about the length of time before the respondent will recover from the damage of unemployment. In one item, the respondent was asked to estimate how long it would take to find suitable full-time employment. The other item asked the respondent to estimate how long it would take to regain the standard of living experienced when last employed. The response alternatives for both questions were three months, six months, nine months, twelve months, more than

fifteen months, and never.

Descriptive Statistics

The reliability coefficients, means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations for these scales are presented in Table 1. For the most part, the reliability of these scales was quite acceptable, only one fell below .78 (for Hopefulness, alpha=.60). There are several patterns within this table of intercorrelations that should be noted before considering tests of our two hypotheses. First, the correlations among the four pQL measures were all positive, but not so high as to preclude separate tests of our hypotheses with each of these four scales. Among these four measures of pQL, Hopefulness had the lowest correlations with the other scales measuring pQL. Second, the two social support scales were negatively correlated. Third, neither source of social support was correlated significantly with any of the four pQL scales.

Insert Table 1 about here

Results

Hypothesis 1. Consistent with predictions, the relationship between prior job involvement and pQL was negative. As shown in Table 1, the correlations between prior job involvement and pQL were significant for three of the four pQL scale scores (Current pQL, Perceived Change, and Need Fulfillment). Although in the predicted direction, Hopefulness failed to yield a significant negative correlation with prior job involvement ($r=-.19$, ns). Respondents reporting higher levels of psychological involvement with their prior jobs generally reported lower levels of pQL during periods of unemployment than did their less job-involved counterparts.

Hypotheses 2a and 2b. There was no support for either the buffering or the

coping hypothesis when pQL was examined as a function of the interaction between social support and prior job involvement. These interactions were not significant for any of the eight statistical tests involving the two measures of social support and the four measures of pQL.

Moderated regression analyses were used to test the predicted interaction effects (Cohen & Cohen, 1975, Zedeck, 1971). These analyses involved a three-step hierarchical regression analysis. The pQL scale score was regressed on prior job involvement (Step 1), current social support (Step 2), and a computed cross-product of each respondent's scores on the prior job involvement and current social support scales (Step 3). A significant interaction is indicated by a significant increment in the total R² value at this third step in the analysis. None of the eight tests of these interaction effects proved to be statistically significant.

General effects of unemployment. The availability of responses from national probability samples for five of our pQL questionnaire items provided a means for testing our assumption that pQL is generally low during periods of unemployment. As shown in Table 2, the mean responses of this sample of unemployed respondents were significantly lower than the national norms for each of these five standard pQL items. Compared to the pattern of response in the national samples, these unemployed respondents described themselves less positively in their feelings regarding their life accomplishments, their selves, their lives as a whole, and respect from others; the present sample also described themselves as being less happy. Thus, at least as evidenced by pQL responses, it appears that, as a group, these unemployed respondents were seriously stressed by the job loss situation.

Insert Table 2 about here

The analyses reported in Table 2 are single sample t-tests in which the mean

responses of our sample were compared to the estimated population means provided by the national sample responses to exactly the same question. This procedure is more conservative than a two-sample test comparing our small sample against the large national samples because the degrees of freedom are determined solely by our one small sample. Table 2 presents the source of normative data and the exact wording for each question involved in this analysis.

Discussion

The present study provides three noteworthy results. First, this sample of unemployed respondents experienced low levels of pQL (when compared to national samples). Second, pQL among these unemployed respondents was negatively related to psychological involvement with their prior job, thereby supporting Hypothesis 1. Third, social support did not interact with prior job involvement to determine pQL, thereby failing to support either the buffering (Hypothesis 2a) or the coping (Hypothesis 2b) models of social support. Each of these three major findings merit further discussion.

General Effects of Unemployment

The finding that unemployed respondents reported low levels of pQL is consistent with prior research on mental health and economic conditions. The results reported here are limited because our self-selected Western New York sample differs from the normative national samples in terms of geographic dispersion and the year in which they were surveyed as well as their employment status at the time of the survey. The normative data used for these comparisons were collected from nationwide surveys conducted in the early 1970's. However, there is considerable evidence suggesting that time and geographic location have relatively little impact on national patterns of pQL responses. Quinn, Staines, and McCullough (1974) traced over 50 years of job

satisfaction surveys and concluded that the percentage of satisfied workers had remained relatively stable over the years. Campbell and his colleagues reached essentially the same conclusion in their analysis of time series data for general life satisfaction and happiness (Campbell, 1981; Campbell et al., 1976). The effects of geographic location have also been small and inconsistent (Campbell, 1981; Campbell et al., 1976). Beyond issues of time and geography, the self-selective character of the present sample must be considered. These respondents all accepted the opportunity for crisis intervention counseling. Such a sample may represent people having the greatest difficulties in adjusting to unemployment, and hence, the lowest pQL.

Although there are clear statistical differences between the present sample and national norms, we cannot be certain of the cause-effect relationships involved. However, it seems highly plausible that these differences reflect the impact of unemployment and/or the interaction of unemployment with whatever additional personal and situational variables may have led these respondents to accept an offer of free counseling services. This interpretation suggests that losing the material and psychological benefits of regular employment in our society can often exact a high toll in terms of one's sense of psychological well-being. Such a conclusion is consistent with the bulk of prior research concerned with the psychological effects of unemployment (Campbell, 1981; Dooley & Catalano, 1980; Jahoda, 1981; Kahn, 1981; Warr, 1982, 1984).

Employment-related Involvement

Although we cannot unequivocally identify the cause of the generally low levels of pQL characterizing this sample as a whole, it is quite clear that pQL was lowest among that subset of respondents who were more psychologically involved in their prior jobs. The negative relationship between prior job involvement and pQL reported

in the present study is an important conceptual extension of existing research on this issue. Previous studies of this type have measured work involvement rather than job involvement. As noted by both Warr, Cook, and Wall (1979) and Kanungo (1982), these two forms of involvement are different in an important way. Whereas job involvement concerns the degree of psychological identification with the specific job one currently holds, work involvement concerns the personal importance of working in general, i.e., degree of involvement in work roles of unspecified content. In prior research testing the joint effects of involvement and unemployment, the following types of items have been used to assess work involvement: "I don't feel right when I'm out of work," "Getting a job is important to me," and "I don't like being out of work." In contrast, our measure was directly tied to the concept of job involvement. We changed standard job involvement items into retrospective accounts of involvement with the last specific job held by the respondent. For example, we asked about the extent to which personal interests were centered around the respondent's last full-time job. The present results, in conjunction with prior research, suggests that both job involvement and work involvement can negatively influence subjective reactions to unemployment. Because both forms of involvement concern the employment situation, it seems useful to refer to this general pattern of results as reflecting the effects of "employment-related" involvement.

The present study extends the generalizability of the relationship between employment-related involvement and reactions to unemployment in ways that go beyond the methods used to measure involvement. This is the first study of Americans examining any form of the relationship between employment-related involvement and unemployment. Previous studies have used British or Australian samples. Also, we used different methods to assess reactions to unemployment. Previous studies have used Bradburn's scales measuring the positive and negative affective value of recent life experiences (Warr, 1978), Goldberg's General Health Questionnaire assessing

psychopathological symptoms (Stafford, et al., 1980), measures of perceived change in physical and mental health following the onset of unemployment (Warr & Jackson, 1984), a one-item measure of worries about meeting financial obligations (Warr & Jackson, 1984), and Rosenberg's measure of self-esteem (Feather & Bond, 1983). The present study suggests that the negative relationship between employment-related involvement and reactions to unemployment can be generalized to Americans and to a set of pQL measures based on general evaluations of one's current life situation (Current pQL), comparisons of one's current life situation to the situation one experienced prior to unemployment (Perceived Change), and comparisons of one's current life situation to what one wants from life (Need Fulfillment). In sum, it appears that the relationship between employment-related involvement and subjective reactions to unemployment is quite robust and broadly generalizable. Accordingly, it would seem essential to recognize this relationship in any conceptual analysis of psychological reactions to unemployment.

The present study and all prior research on the relationship between employment-related involvement and subjective reactions to unemployment have used cross-sectional correlational designs. With such a design, one cannot draw strong causal conclusions. In discussing the results generated by such designs, we have followed the precedent of others in assuming that employment-related involvement is a stable personality characteristic that determines, in part, subsequent reactions to unemployment. However, we cannot eliminate the alternative interpretation suggesting that reactions to unemployment can be the cause of reported employment-related involvement. Longitudinal research designs assessing employment-related involvement and pQL prior to unemployment and after subsequent re-employment are much needed. However, we must recognize the extreme difficulty of conducting such research. Along with the usual difficulties inherent in any study that is extended over a significant period of time, research of the type suggested here must also identify samples likely

to become unemployed. Furthermore, assessment of responses prior to job loss must begin before workers are made aware of the impending layoff because research has shown that there is much stress experienced during the anticipatory period spanning announcement of layoffs and the beginning of actual unemployment (Cobb & Kasl, 1977; Slote, 1969).

Social Support

Although the main effects of both unemployment and prior job involvement conformed to our expectations, social support did not function in the manner we predicted. The interaction of social support and job involvement did not have a significant impact on any of the pQL measures. The failure to find support for either the buffering or coping hypothesis is not entirely surprising. There is considerable controversy concerning the replicability of results showing that various indicators of physical and social strain are determined by interactions between social support and environmental stressors (e.g., Brownell & Shumaker, 1984; Gore, 1981; House, 1981; Seers et al., 1983; Thoits, 1982).

Given the reliability of our major variables and the appropriateness of the statistical procedures used, we must consider seriously the possibility that social support, as conceptualized and operationalized in the present study, cannot moderate the adverse impact of unemployment-related stressors such as prior job involvement. The social support literature is not yet capable of specifying when coping and buffering interactions are likely to occur and when they are not. It is apparent that the conditions of the present study failed to meet those required for such interactions. However, in the absence of the necessary conceptual guidance for analyzing such situations, it is not clear what the relevant factors were.

One promising line of speculation concerns the conceptualization and assessment of social support. It is possible that we failed to find results consistent with the

buffering or coping hypotheses because we failed to assess the appropriate type of social support. Consistent with most prior research, we focused on general emotional support. However, it is possible that the more relevant forms of support for unemployed people involve concrete advice and training in job search skills, job availability, and guidance to available social services. More generally, coping and buffering may be linked to specific types of social support (Chesler & Barbarin, 1984). Future research examining the role of social support among the unemployed should consider a broader range of measures that include forms of social support that go beyond simple emotional support.

It would also be useful to replicate the present study with a larger sample providing a more powerful test of the social support interactions predicted on the basis of the coping and buffering hypotheses. Administrative changes within the participating organization prevented us from getting a sample as large as originally planned. While the sample size was adequate for testing the main effects of interest to us, it was less than optimal for the moderated regression test of the interaction. However, comparisons of regression lines and correlations among those high vs. low in social support or those high vs. low in prior job involvement failed to yield any trends consistent with the patterns predicted by either the buffering or coping hypothesis. Thus, it seems unlikely that simply enlarging the sample size would have yielded significant interactions.

Implications for Application

The present results have practical as well as theoretical implications. The low levels of QOL among these unemployed respondents illustrate further the need to provide a range of social services for this population, e.g., material assistance, training, job search assistance, and psychological counseling. The absence of any

type of moderator effects associated with social support indicates that agencies seeking to serve the unemployed cannot assume that general emotional support from informal social networks will provide either a buffer or coping mechanism that limits the adverse psychological effects of job loss. Finally, the relationship between pQL and employment-related involvement presents a potentially difficult dilemma to those serving the unemployed. On the one hand, providing such services in a manner that fosters employment-related involvement may motivate the unemployed to attain new employment. On the other hand, these same efforts to foster such involvement may have the unintended effect of worsening the experience of unemployment. Practitioners must be aware of both potential outcomes when determining how to provide the various services needed by the unemployed (Warr, 1982, 1984).

Footnotes

This research was supported by the Organizational Effectiveness Program, Office of Naval Research (Code 4420E), under Contract N00014-84-K-0002; NR 170-964 "Work and the Perceived Quality of Life" (Robert W. Rice, Principal Investigator). This paper was presented at the convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, 25 August 1985, under the title "Prior Job Involvement and Quality of Life Among the Unemployed."

Requests for reprints should be addressed to Robert W. Rice, Department of Psychology, State University of New York at Buffalo, 4230 Ridge Lea Road, Amherst, New York, 14226.

References

Andrews, F.M., & Withey, S.B. (1976). *Social indicators of well-being: American's perception of life quality*. New York: Plenum Press.

Bradburn, N.M. (1969). *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago: Aldine.

Brownell, A., & Shumaker, S.A. (Eds.) (1984). *Social support: New perspectives in theory, research, and intervention. Part 1: Theory and research*. *Journal of Social Issues*, 40 (4).

Campbell, A. (1976). Subjective measures of well-being. *American Psychologist*, 31, 117-124.

Campbell, A., (1981). *The sense of well-being in America: Recent patterns and trends*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Campbell, A., Converse, P.W., & Rodgers, W.L. (1976). *The quality of American life*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cobb, S., & Kasl, S.V. (1977). *Termination: The consequences of job loss*. Washington, D.C.: Health, Education, and Welfare Document 282991.

Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. (1975). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis in the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Chesler, M.A. & Barbarin, O.A. (1984). Difficulties of providing help in a crisis: Relationships between parents of children with cancer and their friends. *Journal of Social Issues*, 40, 113-134.

Diener, E. (1984). Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*, 95, 542-575.

Dooley, D. & Catalano, R. (1980). Economic changes as a cause of behavioral disorder. *Psychological Bulletin*, 87, 450-468.

Feather, N.T., & Bond, M.J. (1983). Time structure and purposeful activity among employed and unemployed university graduates. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 56, 241-254.

French, J.P.R., Jr., Caplan, R., & Harrison, V.R. (1982). The mechanisms of job stress and strain. New York: Wiley.

French, J.P.R., Jr., & Kahn, R.L. (1962). A programmatic approach to study the industrial environment and mental health. *Journal of Social Issues*, 18, 1-47.

Gore, S. (1973). The influences of social support and related variables in ameliorating the consequences of job loss. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.

Gore, S. (1981). Stress-buffering functions of social supports: An appraisal and clarification of research models. In B.S. Dohrenwend & B.P. Dohrenwend (Eds.), Stress, life events, and their contexts. New York: Prodist.

Gutek, B.A. (1978). Strategies for studying client satisfaction. *Journal of Social Issues*, 34, 44-56.

House, J.S. (1981). Work stress and social support. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Jahoda, M. (1958). Current concepts of positive mental health. New York: Basic Books.

Jahoda, M. (1981). Work, employment, and unemployment: Values, theories, and approaches in social research. *American Psychologist*, 36, 184-191.

Kahn, R.L. (1981). Work and health. New York: Wiley.

Kanungo, R.N. (1979). The concepts of alienation and involvement revisited. *Psychological Bulletin*, 86, 119-138.

Kanungo, R.N. (1982). Measurement of job and work involvement. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 67, 341-349.

Kaplan, H.B. (1983). Psychological stress: Trends in theory and research. New York: Academic Press.

Lin, N., Simeone, R.S., Ensel, W.M., & Kuo, W.M. (1979). Social support, stressful life events and illness: A model and an empirical test. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 20, 108-119.

Locke, E. A. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. In M.D. Dunnette (Ed.), Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Locke, E. A. (1984). Job satisfaction. In M. Grueneberg and T. Wall (Eds.), Social psychology and organizational behaviour. London: Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Lodahl, T. & Keiner, M. (1965). The definition and measurement of job involvement. Journal of Applied Psychology, 49, 24-33.

Quinn, R.P., & Staines, G.L. (1979). The 1977 quality of employment survey. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.

Quinn, R.P., Staines, G.L., & McCullough, M.R. (1974). Job satisfaction: Is there a trend? Manpower Research Monograph, No. 30, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. Government Printing Office.

Rabinowitz, S., & Hall, D.T. (1977). Organizational research on job involvement. Psychological Bulletin, 84, 265-288.

Rice, R.W., McFarlin, D.B., Hunt, R.G., & Near, J.P. (1985). Organizational work and the perceived quality of life: Toward a conceptual model. Academy of Management Review, 10, 296-310.

Seers, A., McGee, G.W., Serey, T.T., & Graen, G.B. (1983). The interaction of job stress and social support: A strong inference investigation. Academy of Management Journal, 26, 273-284.

Slote, A. (1969). Termination: The closing at Baker plant. New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969.

Spanier, G.P., & Lewis, R.A. (1980). Marital quality: A review of the seventies. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 41, 825-839.

Stafford, E.M., Jackson, P.R., & Banks, M.H. (1980). Employment, work involvement, and mental health in less qualified young people. Journal of Occupational Psychology, 53, 291-304.

Thoits, P.A. (1982). Conceptual, methodological and theoretical problems in studying social support as a buffer against life stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 23, 145-159.

Veroff, J., Douvan, E., & Kulka, R.A. *The inner American: A self portrait from 1957 to 1976*. New York: Wiley.

Warr, P. (1978). A study of psychological well-being. *British Journal of Psychology*, 69, 111-121.

Warr, P. (1982). Psychological aspects of employment and unemployment. *Psychological Medicine*, 12, 7-11.

Warr, P. (1984). Work and unemployment. In P.J.D. Drenth, H. Thierry, P.J. Willems, & C.J. deWolff (Eds.), *Handbook of work and organizational psychology*. London: Wiley.

Warr, P., Cook, J., & Wall, T. (1979). Scales for the measurement of some work attitudes and aspects of psychological well-being. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 52, 129-148.

Warr, P., & Jackson, P. (1984). Men without jobs: Some correlates of age and length of unemployment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 57, 77-85.

Warr, P., & Lovatt, J. (1977). Retraining and other factors associated with job finding after redundancy. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 50, 67-84.

Zedeck, S. (1971). Problems with the use of moderator variables. *Psychological Bulletin*, 76, 295-310.

Table 1
 Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations,
 and Reliabilities for Major Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Prior Job Involvement							
2. Social Support: Spouse	12	(90)					
3. Social Support: Friends and Family	-06	-38**	(78)				
4. Direct pQL	-26*	14	-05	(79)			
5. Perceived Change	-42**	17	00	80**	(79)		
6. Need Fulfillment	-39**	09	-11	66**	75**	(78)	
7. Hopefulness	-19	23	15	33*	45**	26*	(60)
M	15.0	3.1	5.0	29.5	10.7	9.3	3.5
SD	3.0	1.2	2.1	9.2	3.3	4.6	2.9

Note. Decimals omitted. Entries on the main diagonal are reliability estimates (Coefficient Alpha).

* p < .05 ** p < .01 (two-tailed tests)

N's range from 34 - 47

Table 2
Comparisons With National Samples

	Means (and standard deviations)			t
	Present Sample	National Samples	df	
Taking all things together, how would you say things are these days? Would you say you're very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy these days? (3=very happy, 2=pretty happy, 1=not too happy)	1.53 (0.59)	2.22 ^a (0.61)	46	8.11**
How do you feel about what you are accomplishing in life? (Andrews & Withey, 1967, D-T response format: 7=delighted, 6=pleased, 5=mostly satisfied, 4=mixed (about equally satisfied and dissatisfied), 3=mostly dissatisfied, 2=unhappy, 1=terrible)	3.80 (1.80)	5.05 ^b (1.12)	41	3.33**
How do you feel about the amount of respect you get from others? (D-T response format)	4.30 ^c (1.38)	5.30 (1.07)	41	3.01**
How do you feel about yourself? (D-T response format)	4.20 ^d (1.27)	5.20 (1.11)	39	2.77**
How do you feel about your life as a whole? (D-T response format)	3.40 ^e (1.60)	5.40 (1.11)	46	8.05**

Notes.

^aThis mean is based on the composite response distributions of the nine national samples: the six presented by Campbell et. al. (1976, p. 26) and the three presented by Quinn and Staines (1979, p. 233).

^bThis mean is based on the composite response distributions of two national samples (Andrews & Withey 1976, p. 267).

^cOne national survey (Andrews & Withey, 1967, p. 272).

^dThis mean is based on the composite response distributions of two national samples (Andrew & Withey, 1976, p. 266).

^eThis mean is based on the composite response distributions of eight national samples (Andrews & Withey, 1967, pp. 208-209, 311, 433-434).

** p < .01 (two-tailed test)

442GP DISTRIBUTION LIST

LIST 1
MANDATORY

Defense Technical Information Center (12 copies)
ATTN: DTIC DDA-2
Selection and Preliminary Cataloging Section
Cameron Station
Alexandria, VA 22314

Library of Congress
Science and Technology Division
Washington, D.C. 20540

Office of Naval Research (3 copies)
Code 442GP
800 N. Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22217

Naval Research Laboratory (6 copies)
Code 2627
Washington, D.C. 20375

Office of Naval Research
Director, Technology Programs
Code 200
800 N. Quincy Street
Arlington, VA 22217

Psychologist
Office of Naval Research
Detachment, Pasadena
1030 East Green Street
Pasadena, CA 91106

Sequential by Principal Investigator

LIST 13
CURRENT CONTRACTORS

Dr. Clayton P. Alderfer
Yale University
School of Organization and Management
New Haven, Connecticut 06520

Dr. Janet L. Barnes-Farrell
Department of Psychology
University of Hawaii
2430 Campus Road
Honolulu, HI 96822

Dr. Jomills Braddock
John Hopkins University
Center for the Social Organization
of Schools
3505 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

Dr. Sara Yogeve
Northwestern University
Graduate School of Management
2001 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201

Dr. Terry Connolly
University of Arizona
Department of Psychology, Rm. 312
Tucson, AZ 85721

Dr. Richard Daft
Texas A&M University
Department of Management
College Station, TX 77843

Dr. Randy Dunham
University of Wisconsin
Graduate School of Business
Madison, WI 53706

List 13 (continued)

Dr. J. Richard Hackman
School of Organization
and Management
Box 1A, Yale University
New Haven, CT 06520

Dr. Wayne Holder
American Humane Association
P.O. Box 1266
Denver, CO 80201

Dr. Daniel Ilgen
Department of Psychology
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824

Dr. David Johnson
Professor, Educational Psychology
178 Pillsbury Drive, S.E.
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Dr. Frank J. Landy
The Pennsylvania State University
Department of Psychology
417 Bruce V. Moore Building
University Park, PA 16802

Dr. Bibb Latane
The University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
Manning Hall 026A
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Dr. Cynthia D. Fisher
College of Business Administration
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX 77843

Dr. Robert Rice
State University of New York at Buffalo
Department of Psychology
Buffalo, NY 14226

Dr. Benjamin Schneider
Department of Psychology
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742

Dr. H. Wallace Sinaiko
Program Director, Manpower Research
and Advisory Services
Smithsonian Institution
801 N. Pitt Street, Suite 120
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dr. Eliot Smith
Psychology Department
Purdue University
West Lafayette, IN 47907

Dr. Harry C. Triandis
Department of Psychology
University of Illinois
Champaign, IL 61820

Dr. Anne S. Tsui
Duke University
The Fuqua School of Business
Durham, NC 27706

Dr. Andrew H. Van de Ven
University of Minnesota
Office of Research Administration
1919 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104

END

FILMED

1-86

DTIC